

business "5" according to promotion "1". Referring to table 400, these awards are not encumbered. Thus, in step 708, row 338 is the most encumbered of the awards.--

REMARKS

The paragraph starting on line 29 of page 11 has been amended to corrected typographical errors so that it is clear that, between rows 338 and 340 of Fig. 3, row 338 corresponds to the most encumbered awards. Applicants submits that no new matter has been added by the above-described amendments.

CONCLUSION

Applicants believe all claims now pending in this Application are in condition for allowance. The issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance at an early date is respectfully requested.

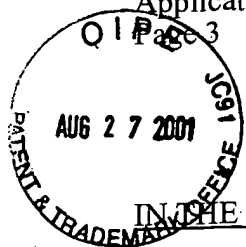
If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 415-576-0200.

Respectfully submitted,



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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please amend the paragraph starting on line 29 of page 11 as follows:

--Then, in a step 708, of the available awards with the earliest expiration date and with the earliest earning date, the most encumbered awards are determined. In the above example, the available awards with the earliest expiration date and with the earliest earning date correspond to rows 338 and 340. The awards corresponding to row 338 were earned at business "4" according to promotion "2". Referring now to Fig. 4, row 412 indicates that awards earned at business "4" according to promotion "2" are not accepted by supplier "200". Thus, the awards corresponding to row 338 are encumbered. On the other hand, the awards corresponding to row [338] 340 were earned at business "5" according to promotion "1". Referring to table 400, these awards are not encumbered. Thus, in step 708, row [340] 338 is the most encumbered of the awards.--